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VA initiatives grab recognition for leadership, management and contribution to science

WASHINGTON – Two U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) initiatives were recently named finalists of the [Samuel J. Heyman Service to America Medals](#) (Sammies) for VA's [Connected Care program](#) and [3D printing](#) initiatives.

Leadership and management of VA's [Connected Care's](#) efforts on telehealth, mobile apps and other digital health solutions has made headway in removing barriers to care for thousands of Veterans, while the department's contribution to science through the [3D Printing Network](#) has assisted health care providers with medical procedures and reduction of unnecessary surgeries.

"VA has long been a leader in incorporating innovative technologies to meet the health care needs of our nation's Veterans," said VA Secretary Robert Wilkie. "It's inspiring to see these programs and the leaders recognized for their tireless work in improving health care services for Veterans."

Among the accomplishments from the finalists, in fiscal year 2019, more than 900,000 Veterans used VA telehealth services, resulting in almost 3 million appointments. [VA Video Connect](#) sessions increased by 235% with close to 100,000 Veterans joining virtual appointments from home and nearly 300,000 total appointments.

[My HealtheVet](#) has surpassed 5 million registered users. In March alone, there were over 2 million prescription refill requests submitted through My HealtheVet — the most VA prescription refill requests ever made through the patient portal in a single month. VA Video Connect visits increased from approximately 2,000 per day to between 16,000 and 18,000 per day in mid-April.

[In March, VA quickly mobilized its 3D printing resources nationwide to help with the fight against COVID-19.](#) The department is also the first integrated health care system in the United States to establish a national 3D Printing Network that enables its health care staff to share ideas, resources and best practices to deliver quality care to patients throughout its enterprise. Innovations in 3D printing across VA have led to advancements in surgery, prosthetics and the treatment of chronic illnesses. Additionally, 3D printing is enabling VA's medical providers to customize and tailor solutions to unique, individual patient needs, putting the Veteran at the center of their treatment plan.

Veterans interested in learning more about VA's remote health care services, visit <https://www.telehealth.va.gov/> and <https://www.mobile.va.gov/>. Innovators interested in participating in VHA's 3D Printing Network COVID-19 response can visit <https://www.va.gov/INNOVATIONECOSYSTEM/3d-print-covid19.html>.

The Sammies highlight innovative work and accomplishments in federal government that meet the needs of Americans. VA Sammies finalists can be viewed [here](#).

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